



June 16, 2015

The Honorable Amanda Price
Chair, House Education Committee
Michigan House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Chairwoman Price,

Michigan businesses rely on top-tier talent to compete in the global marketplace, and a key driver of talent is a robust and rigorous education system. Over the last few years, we have advocated for standards that are evidence-based, benchmarked against peers, and focused on ensuring students graduate career and college ready.

The legislature has taken many steps over the last few years to improve Michigan's education system and to meet these goals – including tenure reforms, adoption of the Michigan State Standards, and adoption of a state assessment. These reforms are only now starting to take place, however, they will not be complete without reform to Michigan's teacher and administrative evaluation process.

Today, Michigan is at or near the bottom for student learning and improvement among all 50 states in most subjects and grades. Data has shown that in key subjects, such as fourth grade reading, our students are learning at lower levels today than they were ten years ago. This is unacceptable, as students and families deserve every opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

Senate Bill 103 seeks to amend Michigan's teacher and administrator evaluation system. As the Education Committee considers this important legislation, we ask that you strengthen this key piece of legislation by considering the following principles:

- **Ensure a significant portion of educator evaluations is based on student learning growth**
- **Require evaluation tools meet certain state standards of quality**
- **Include a more meaningful and accurate definition of teacher rating system**
- **Protect current investment in student growth modeling and evaluator training**

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These recommendations will provide the opportunity for every student in Michigan to achieve their potential by requiring high quality teachers in every classroom. Having high quality and effective teachers is essential to ensuring student success, and states that have adopted strong teacher evaluation and support systems have shown immense progress in transforming their schools.

Thank you for considering this important legislation to develop a new educator evaluation system focused on raising teaching and learning standards in our schools.

As you move forward in discussing this legislation, please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Thank you,

Tim Sowton
Vice President of Government Affairs & Public Policy
Business Leaders for Michigan

Brad Williams
Vice President of Government Relations
Detroit Regional Chamber

Andy Johnston
Vice President of Government & Corporate Affairs
Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce

cc: Members of the House Education Committee
Michigan House of Representatives